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FEASIBILITY STUDY ON CONVENING A REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON TRANSPORT AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Report by the Executive Secretary

A. MANDATE AND FOLLOW-UP BY THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

1. At its forty-eighth session the Commission adopted two decisions with provisions relating to follow-up action to the UNCED Agenda 21. In paragraph 9 of decision F (48) on cooperation in the field of environment and sustainable development and in paragraph 4 of decision G (48) on cooperation in the field of transport, the Commission:

> "Accepts the invitation contained in UNCED Agenda 21 to study the feasibility of organizing a regional conference on transport and the environment and requests the Executive Secretary to carry out such a study in cooperation with member States, the European Community and interested organizations, making full use of the expertise and taking into account the views of the Principal Subsidiary Bodies concerned, especially the Inland Transport Committee, the Senior Advisers on Environmental and Water Problems and the Committee on Energy, and to report the results of the study to the Commission well in advance of the forty-ninth session in order to prepare its further decisions on the matter."

2. In accordance with this mandate and as part of the feasibility study called for, the Executive Secretary, on 7 October 1993, issued a note (TRANS/R.376) designed to ascertain the views of ECE member Governments and concerned international organizations. This note contained a large menu of possible issues to be considered and options for the convening of a regional conference on transport and the environment.

3. The Executive Secretary also consulted with the Commission of the European Community (CEC) and the secretariats of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the International Energy Agency (IEA) and the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT) and expressed interest in cooperating closely with these organizations in the preparation of the mandated study.

4. As far as the time-frame set for the completion of the study allowed, the Executive Secretary also conferred with all concerned Principal Subsidiary Bodies (PSBs) of the Commission and solicited their views on the feasibility of such a conference. Consultations have been held with the following PSBs:

Heads of Delegations of the Senior Advisers to ECE Governments on Environmental and Water Problems (19-20 October 1993)

Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians (26-27 October 1993)

Committee on Energy (9-11 November 1993)

Executive Body for the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (1-3 December 1993)

Coordination Meeting of the Inland Transport Committee (2-3 December 1993)

Inland Transport Committee (17-21 January 1994)

Informal ad hoc group of the Inland Transport Committee (28 February 1994)

5. As invited by the Executive Secretary, a number of ECE member Governments have transmitted to the secretariat their written views on the convening of such a conference. Furthermore, the secretariat has received written comments from other United Nations organizations and governmental organizations, such as from ICAO, IMO, UNCTAD and HABITAT, the Council of Europe, OECD, ECMT and EFTA as well as from various non-governmental organizations, such as UIC, EUROMOT, AECC, T&E, IRU, CLEPA, and FIHUAT.

6. The results of this consultation process were reported to the Ad Hoc Informal Meeting of the Commission (31 January 1994) and are contained in the interim report prepared for that meeting by the secretariat.

7. More recently further consultations have been undertaken with the Commission of the European Community (DGVII) in order to ascertain its cooperation and agree on the topics to be dealt with by the Conference.

8. On the basis of these consultations and in compliance with the mandate given by the Commission, the Executive Secretary presents below his considerations on the feasibility of a regional conference on transport and the environment and identifies a number of issues on which the Commission may wish to express itself.

B. THE NEED TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT

9. The sustained economic growth during the past decades has led to serious environmental problems. Some of these problems, such as noise and vibrations, land-taking and intrusion, as well as certain forms of air, water and soil pollution, with harmful effects on human health and the environment including urban environment, are suffered locally, in the vicinity of the source. Others such as pollution of transboundary water courses and certain effects of air pollution, such as "acid rain" which affects life and corrodes building materials, can cross borders and be suffered in other countries. Finally, other consequences of air pollution, such as the depletion of the ozone layer, which reduces the protection of the earth against the ultra-violet rays of the sun; the build-up of ozone in the troposphere, which affects human health and animal life; and the "greenhouse effect", which could warm the globe and raise the sea level, have a global impact.

10. Although scientific evidence as to the magnitude of the problem is not yet conclusive, the threat of a global warming caused by high concentration of certain gases in the atmosphere was one of the major issues which led Heads of State and Governments to meet at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992. Some 160 States, including most ECE member States, have so far signed and some 60 States have already ratified the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, opened for signature on that occasion, which seeks to stabilize at their 1990 level total emissions of carbon dioxide (CO_2), responsible for the "greenhouse effect" and caused mainly by consumption of fossil fuels, by the year 2000. The Conference also adopted a comprehensive action programme, Agenda 21, to protect the environment.

11. Awareness of the international dimension of environmental problems had already led ECE Governments to develop an international legal framework to reduce the harmful effects of human activities on the environment and their transboundary consequences. A major ECE achievement is the 1979 Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (LRTAP) and its Protocols, which set up targets to limit emissions of nocive substances, such as sulphur dioxide (SO_2), which cause "acid rain"; nitrogen oxides (NO_x), which contribute to "acid rain", the build-up of ozone in the troposphere and the "greenhouse effect"; and volatile organic compounds (VOC), responsible for the build-up of tropospheric ozone. Other achievements of ECE in this field are the 1991 Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context and the 1992 Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Water courses and International Lakes.

C. THE IMPACT OF TRANSPORT ON THE ENVIRONMENT

12. The targets set in these international instruments apply to the total emissions caused by all sources of pollution, therefore to all economic activities. However, energy generation, industry and transport are considered to be the sectors of the economy which contribute the most to environmental problems.

13. Transport consumes energy and causes air, water, soil and sea pollution as well as noise and vibrations. With regard to air pollution, transport is responsible for emissions of CO_2, NO_x, VOCs, hydrocarbons (HC), carbon monoxide

(CO), lead, particulates and SO_x. Congestion, due to insufficiency of infrastructure to cope with demand, particularly at peak periods, aggravates the situation and raises concern particularly for road and air transport in and around urban areas. Transport accounts for some 30% - almost as much as industry - of the total final energy consumption in the European Community (EC). Transport infrastructure adversely affects the environment through land-taking and intrusion.

14. Of all modes of transport, road transport is the one which has the biggest environmental impact in terms of energy consumption and air pollution. Road transport is responsible for important shares of CO_2, CO, NO_x, VOC, HC, lead, particulates and a smaller share of SO_x. Road transport accounts for over 80% of the total final energy consumption in the transport sector and over 75% of its total CO_2 emissions in the EC. Road transport is however not the transport mode which presents the highest specific energy consumption. A large part of all pollutants from road transport is released into the atmosphere in urban areas.

15. With regard to other modes of inland transport, railways cause mainly noise and vibrations but also air pollution both directly (diesel traction) and indirectly (electric traction). Inland navigation causes mainly water and air pollution. Coastal shipping causes sea pollution through accidents and discharges as well as air pollution.

16. Air transport causes noise and vibrations but also gaseous emissions which, since they are released at high altitude, are considered to be particularly harmful. Air transport presents the highest specific energy consumption of all transport modes. Maritime transport causes sea pollution through accidents and discharges as well as air pollution. Finally, the transport of dangerous goods presents a potential risk for the environment through accidents.

D. TRANSPORT AND DEVELOPMENT

17. However, while the economic growth during the past decades has led to environmental problems, it has also led to an unprecedented level of economic and social well-being. Transport has provided a major contribution to such economic and social development. Transport is indeed vital to the well functioning and development of economic activities, to the production and distribution of goods and services as well as to trade. It is also of strategic importance for the opening up of peripheral and isolated regions and for their integration in the national economy. Furthermore, it ensures mobility of citizens, which allows them to perform economic and social activities and contributes to their well-being.

18. In order to ensure these functions and to achieve those objectives, ECE Governments have always promoted the development of transport and played a key role in such development, including the supply of transport services. In the past decades, Governments have increasingly limited their role to the supply of infrastructures and the establishment of a regulatory framework within which, through the action of market forces and competition, personal mobility and transport services can develop and become more efficient. Such an approach and the sustained economic growth has fostered the development of transport services and of the whole transport sector, which accounts today for

7 to 8% of GDP and for some 10% of employment. This holds true particularly for ECE market economies which have been applying such approach for decades now. Countries in transition have just started to place their transport systems increasingly under market conditions.

19. At the same time, through a complex interrelationship, transport has provided in the past decades a significant boost to economic growth. On the one hand, the increase in efficiency and quality of transport services and the reduction of their costs, due to the action of market forces and competition, particularly in road and air transport, has contributed to a more efficient development and a better functioning of economic activities and therefore to higher economic growth. On the other hand, the transport equipment industry is one of the principal and most dynamic industrial sectors in many ECE countries. In particular, the motor vehicle industry, including parts and accessories, through its major direct contribution to the development of other industrial sectors of which it is the principal customer, is considered to be in some ECE member countries the driving force behind the development of the whole economy.

20. Through the development of personal mobility, transport has also contributed to the good functioning of economic activities and to social well-being. Furthermore, it has contributed better to integrate peripheral and isolated regions in the national economy and to social cohesion.

21. It is important - and ECE Governments are aware of this - that transport continues to play such an important economic and social role in future. To do so, transport must take environmental concerns fully into account and to place itself in the perspective of sustainable development.

E. REDUCING THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF TRANSPORT

22. The issue at stake is therefore how to continue to ensure mobility while protecting the environment. ECE Governments have already started to provide answers to this question and a number of policy measures have been taken. The Government of the United States of America was a pioneer in setting up strict emission levels. Other European Governments followed suit. More recently the EC has made a thorough analysis of the issue in its Green Paper on the Impact of Transport on the Environment and its White Paper on the Future Development of the Common Transport Policy and has, among other measures, promoted and made mandatory a significant abatement in the emission performance of motor vehicles. The ECMT organized in 1989 a Conference of Ministers of Transport and issued a Resolution on the subject.

23. In the framework of the Working Party on the Construction of Vehicles (WP.29) of the Inland Transport Committee, ECE Governments have developed fourteen ECE Regulations annexed to the 1958 Agreement concerning the Adoption of Uniform Conditions of Approval and Reciprocal Recognition of Approval for Motor Vehicle Equipment and Parts, which set up specific limits and requirements for energy consumption, gaseous emissions and noise for all kinds of motor vehicles. These regulations, which are constantly kept up to date with the best available technology, have been or are being brought into line with the relevant EC Directives.

24. As a result, the present level of emissions (CO, HC, NO_x, VOC and particulates) of new vehicles manufactured according to these regulations is

up to 90% lower than that of vehicles manufactured before 1970. The level of noise, measured in acoustic power, is 70% lower, and fuel consumption, directly linked to CO_2 emissions, is 30% lower. The ECE regulations setting such stricter emission standards for pollutants other than CO_2 entered into force at the end of 1992 and the improvements are not yet noticeable since the majority of the present vehicle park was manufactured according to less stringent limits. However, in the ECE member countries which had started their implementation before that date, improvement in the local air-quality in large urban areas is already being noticed.

F. TODAY'S ISSUES. WHY A CONFERENCE

25. While these achievements are important, and progress is continuously made, several causes of concern remain. Firstly, the above-mentioned emission limits are not mandatory in all ECE countries. Secondly, they concern new vehicles only, while a large part of the existing vehicle park - some 220 million motor vehicles in Europe, some 600 million in the world - continue to pollute up to ten times more. Last but not least, the roughly 30% improvement in CO_2 emissions since 1970 has already been offset by the increase in the number and engine power of vehicles. This is a major problem whose solution requires further technological research but also commonly agreed political decisions, particularly in view of the expected development trends in the transport sector.

26. In this respect, current transport deregulation policies in western Europe and transition to market economy as well as long awaited aspirations to personal mobility after decades of centralized transport in central and eastern Europe are expected to lead to a significant increase in road transport.

27. In order to achieve the objectives for CO_2 emissions set up in the Convention on Climate Change, some ECE Governments envisage the adoption of specific CO_2 taxes. This raises the question of the usefulness of such taxes in reducing CO_2 emissions in the transport sector, given the low elasticity of transport demand to the increase in transport prices. To have significant impact, taxes would need to be high, which raises the question of their impact on transport costs and therefore on the costs of final products, which would become less competitive in international markets. It seems that such taxes should affect all sectors and be adopted by all countries according to commonly agreed criteria. The political acceptability of such taxes is another problem which would be better solved if taxes were adopted by all countries. All these problems require political decisions.

28. The increasingly lower public acceptability of international transit traffic of goods by road along sensitive corridors through some central European countries is an issue of concern for transport policy which could find a solution in the perspective of commonly agreed transport policy measures to protect the environment. Combined transport is considered to be a sound solution particularly for such traffic. However, a significant boost to its development must still be given, which requires coordinated political decisions of all concerned. More generally the adoption of minimum environmental standards for road vehicles in international road transport has already been proposed and would need political decision.

29. These and other environmental problems of transport policy could be discussed in the framework of an ECE Conference on Transport and the Environment. The perspective of such a conference would set in motion a process which, on the basis of the latest investigations on the environmental situation and a thorough analysis of the measures already taken or envisaged, would lead to the adoption by the conference of commonly agreed measures to solve those problems.

30. Such a Conference could be an occasion for ECE member Governments to show their political will and commitment to take up, in the field of transport, the challenge set up at the Rio Summit towards the environment. It would, in particular, give a political signal to the transport industry and to the public at large of the intentions of Governments to pursue actively environmental objectives in the field of transport. It could also lead to coordinated investment decisions by a number of Governments.

31. The Conference could create a momentum which would encourage all ECE member Governments to participate and contribute actively to the common endeavour to reduce the environmental impact of transport. It would serve as an example for the rest of the world and might also lead other sectors of the economy to undertake a similar approach.

32. The Conference would provide Governments and the transport equipment industry with a unique opportunity to present their latest achievements in environmentally sound and clean transport technologies.

G. CONCEPT AND SCOPE OF THE CONFERENCE

33. Since all modes of transport have an environmental impact, it could seem appropriate, at least in principle, that all modes of transport should be considered. Given their importance in the European context, special emphasis should, however, be accorded to the inland modes (road, rail, inland water transport, coastal shipping and combined transport), which are those dealt with by the ECE. Particular attention should be paid to road transport in view of its higher impact on the environment and to the various possibilities for reducing this impact. The extent to which maritime and air transport, having a global rather than a regional dimension, could be dealt with by the conference could be decided at a later stage.

34. There are a number of advantages for such a conference being convened under the auspices of the ECE. Firstly, ECE is a UN body, which makes it appropriate to deal with the follow-up to UNCED. Secondly, ECE is a multidisciplinary body which encompasses the most relevant areas, namely environment, transport, energy and others. In the field of the environment, as indicated in paragraph 11, the ECE developed the Convention on LRTAP which is providing for maximum national emission levels for certain pollutants. In the field of transport, ECE has, inter alia, the appropriate regulatory framework - WP.29 and the 1958 Agreement - within which international requirements including environmental requirements for the approval of road vehicles are developed. Thirdly, its increased membership, but also its capacity to develop global conventions in the field of transport, would make it possible to extend the provisions adopted to other countries in the world. Finally, ECE is also a neutral forum which makes it appropriate for dealing with the specific situation of countries of central and eastern Europe.

35. Since transport policy measures are the expected product of the conference, it seems appropriate that transport should play the leading role in the preparation and organization of the conference.

36. The complexity of the task, and the need to take fully into account the work done in other institutions and organizations, makes it advisable that the Conference be organized in close cooperation with the Commission of the European Community and with ECMT. Whenever appropriate, other international organizations dealing with maritime and air transport could also be involved or at least consulted during the preparatory process of the conference.

37. All related activities of international organizations should be taken into account, particularly the second Baltic Sea Transport Conference in Kaliningrad (February 1994), the Crete Conference of Ministers of Transport (March 1994) and the Budapest Conference on reconciling transport, energy and environmental issues: the role of urban transport (May/June 1994).

H. PARTICIPATION

38. In order to send the expected political impulse throughout the region, the participation of Government ministers or other senior Government officials responsible for transport policy would be a prerequisite. Moreover, the inter-disciplinary nature of the issues to be discussed at the conference would also require the participation of representatives of a range of other Ministries, particularly those of the environment, energy, industry and others.

39. The conference should be open to all member States of the ECE and other interested States members of the United Nations, as well as to interested international organizations and institutions, relevant NGOs and representatives of industry.

I. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

40. Topics for discussion at the Conference should, in line with the participation of Ministers, be adequate for high level political discussion and be future oriented. They could be selected from or in connection with the following four major areas for action: (a) Vehicle technology, including future engines and alternative fuels; (b) Traffic management, including advanced information systems to avoid congestion but also fiscal measures, their political acceptability and their economic implications; (c) Transport infrastructure, including combined transport infrastructure and appropriate criteria for cost-benefit analysis of transport infrastructure projects on a strategic basis, taking into account environmental impact; (d) Transport substitution, including land planning and the introduction of new communication and information systems (data highways, electronic work/shopping stations) as alternatives to transport.

J. OUTPUT OF THE CONFERENCE

41. While the topics for discussion should be political and far reaching future oriented, the results of the conference should rather be turned to action and provide a substantive and possibly legal value added. The outcome of the conference should therefore be enshrined in a regional plan or programme of action, possibly in an international transport convention. Such

a programme should not only define, to the extent possible, the concept of sustainable mobility as a basis for action in all ECE member countries but also, and more important, identify concrete short-, medium- and long-term measures and/or targets towards the realization of such a concept taking into account the situation in central and east European countries. In particular and as examples, concrete policy measures in such a regional programme of action could focus on the following:

(a) Targets for energy consumption and emission levels in line with the already accepted values and foreseeable technological developments, and a staggered time-table for implementation, including short-term measures concerning the existing vehicle park, such as mandatory inspection and accelerated removal of the oldest vehicles and their recycling, and adoption of the highest available standards for new vehicles;

(b) Mechanisms to monitor the implementation of targets, transport policy measures and standards concerning energy consumption and emissions;

(c) Measures to promote technological research with a view to the:

improvement in energy efficiency of present engines;

improvement in the quality of motor fuels;

further reduction of emissions for future vehicles;

introduction of alternative renewable energy sources;

development of electric or hybrid vehicles; and

improvement of energy efficiency for rail transport;

(d) Measures to reduce congestion including the introduction of advanced information systems;

(e) Common criteria for fiscal measures, i.e. fuel and CO_2 taxes;

(f) Common criteria for cost-benefit analysis of infrastructure projects, including strategic impact assessment;

(g) Measures to foster the development of combined transport particularly for transit traffic, including infrastructure;

(h) A set of basic environmental requirements to be applied to the various elements of road transport, including vehicles and driver education (possibly to be developed into an ECE transport convention);

(i) Guidelines for encouraging local authorities to develop clean urban transport systems taking into account the national legislative arrangements with those authorities;

42. These measures should be elaborated during the preparatory process by an intergovernmental Preparatory Committee (PREPCOM) on the basis of analysis, assessments and consultations with all ECE member Governments. Assessments of

various alternative solutions should be made, including their benefits and costs.

43. The output of the conference should not be considered as a final step providing answers to all problems in the field of transport and the environment. But the "final product" of the conference, while taking due account of the important results already achieved, should clearly demonstrate that ECE member Governments are ready to face the challenges and make efforts to reduce the environmental impact of transport and to harmonize different transport policies in this field, taking also into account the specific circumstances of the central and east European countries.

K. ORGANIZATION OF THE CONFERENCE

44. A regional conference on transport and the environment should be scheduled for a date which would allow its conclusions to be submitted to the Review Conference for the follow-up to UNCED Agenda 21 which will take place in 1997. Thus such a conference should preferably be held in the first half of 1996, at a date which does not conflict with other major meetings, such as the annual meeting of Ministers of the ECMT, the next conference of "Environment for Europe", conferences of the European Ministers of Transport subsequent to the meeting in Crete in 1994 and the annual sessions of the ECE and its relevant PSBs.

45. Such a conference could be held at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, unless an ECE member Government or an international organization or institution offered to host it away from Geneva.

46. The conference itself might last up to two days, with a possible preparatory conference, if deemed necessary, of one to three days to be held immediately prior to the conference.

L. PREPARATORY PROCESS

47. It is obvious that the success of the conference would not only depend on the willingness for cooperative action among ECE member Governments, but in particular on its thorough preparation.

48. Given the complexity of the subject and the need for a thorough and rigorous analysis of all aspects including the economic feasibility of the measures to be proposed to the conference, it seems indispensable that a preparatory intergovernmental committee (PREPCOM) assume responsibility for decisions governing the overall organization and objectives of the conference, its agenda, rules of procedure, participation, date and venue, documentation and funding. Besides interested Governments, the secretariats of the international organizations designated to organize the conference should participate. The elaboration of a regional programme of action to be adopted by the conference and the participation of ministers or their senior aides would require careful preparation and justify the establishment of such a PREPCOM.

49. The substantial issues to be considered and adopted at the conference would need to be prepared, at the request of the PREPCOM, by technical and scientific experts from Governments or by consultants. The PREPCOM would need to be serviced by the ECE secretariat.

50. In order to achieve tangible results within the short time span available until 1996, the following scenario of events could be envisaged:

April 1994:	The Commission may wish to approve the convening of a regional conference on transport and the environment, and to decide on the setting up of the necessary preparatory structure.(*)
June 1994: (3 days)	First meeting of the PREPCOM. Consideration of substantive issues. Questionnaire to request information on measures already taken and envisaged. Request for report on substantial issues.
Oct. 1994: (5 days)	Second meeting of the PREPCOM. Taking stock of measures taken and envisaged. Discussion of interim report on substantial issues.
Dec. 1994: (3 days)	Third meeting of the PREPCOM. Discussion of final report on substantial issues.
Jan. 1995:	The Inland Transport Committee takes note of report on substantial issues and reviews preparatory process with regard to technical and legal aspects.
Feb. 1995: (5 days)	Fourth meeting of the PREPCOM. Elaboration of measures to be adopted by the conference.
April 1995:	The Commission supervises the preparatory process and gives further policy guidance.
May 1995:	Senior Advisers on Environmental and Water Problems.
May 1995: (5 days)	Fifth meeting of the PREPCOM. On the basis of guidance by the Commission, continues elaboration of policies and measures to be adopted by the conference.
Sept. 1995- May 1996:	Further preparatory steps and meetings of the PREPCOM.

(*) The preliminary scenario of events might have to be adjusted in the light of the decisions by the Commission taken at its forty-ninth session.

51. The servicing of the preparations for the conference as well as its organization could be ensured by the ECE secretariat, in particular its Transport Division, in cooperation with the Environment and Human Settlements Division and other relevant Divisions, the Commission of the European Community and the ECMT secretariat. With regard to the ECE secretariat, additional resources would need to be provided particularly to the Transport Division for the duration of the preparatory process through voluntary contributions.

M. FINANCING

52. If the conference were to be organized as an integral part of the ECE programme of meetings in Geneva, there would be no additional cost for conference services. Were it to be a ECE meeting but hosted away from Geneva, the host government or organization would be required to meet the additional costs. If the conference were to be organized by the ECE in co-operation with other institutions, it would be desirable that costs be shared. Were the conference to be organized outside the ECE framework, its funding would be the responsibility of the host government or organization.

53. Additional funds would be required to prepare meetings of the PREPCOM while their organization, if held in Geneva, could be absorbed in the ECE general budget. If such meetings are held outside Geneva, the host Government or organization must assume responsibility for any supplementary expenses.

54. While part of the substantive preparation for the conference, including technical papers, could be carried out by the secretariats involved, the expected volume of substantive documentation would require in-kind contributions, either by member Governments or by consultants financed from voluntary contributions. If most of the substantive inputs were to be assigned to the ECE secretariat, preparations for other elements of the Commission's programme of work might need to be re-phased.

55. For the first phase of the preparatory process, it is indispensable that substantive inputs for the meetings of the PREPCOM be prepared. It could be expected that the information to be provided by Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations would already provide a conceptually and technically sound basis for the preparation of the conference. However, it might happen that on one or another of the specific issues to be dealt with by the conference it might be necessary to hire external consultants. In such a case the relevant expenses would have to be met by voluntary contributions. An estimation of the total cost according to experience of the organization of similar conferences will be provided at the annual session of the Commission.

N. CONCLUSIONS

56. Reconciling the objectives of mobility and protection of the environment is a difficult task. The international dimension of the issue makes the task more complex and raises problems which require cooperation among Governments. However, the progress already accomplished in reducing the harmful effects of transport on the environment, to which ECE has provided a major contribution, is promising.

57. The Executive Secretary believes that, if convened in line with the above orientations, an ECE Conference on Transport and Environment is feasible and can provide efficient, away from extremes and future oriented solutions to identified problems, calling on technological innovation, sound economic analysis and imagination.

58. ECE played a historical role in promoting the development of transport in Europe after the Second World War, when it was necessary to ensure economic development and social well-being. Through its ongoing work and this Conference, the ECE will also play a historical role in the issue at stake today: reconciling transport and the environment.

O. DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN BY THE COMMISSION

59. The Commission may wish to review the present study and endorse its findings. In particular, the Commission may wish to take a decision on the following issues:

(a) Should a regional conference on transport and the environment be organized?

(b) Should the conference be held by mid-1996 at the latest to allow its results to be reported to the Review Conference for the follow-up to UNCED Agenda 21 which will take place in 1997?

(c) Should transport have the lead in organizing the conference and should it be organized in close cooperation with Commission of the European Community (CEC) and the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT)? (If yes, the Commission may wish to invite the CEC and the ECMT to designate a staff member for the necessary cooperation and coordination).

(d) Should the preparatory process, as set out in this study, be set in motion?

(e) What are the contributions by ECE member Governments and international organizations to assist in the preparations and the organization of the conference?